

Down Time

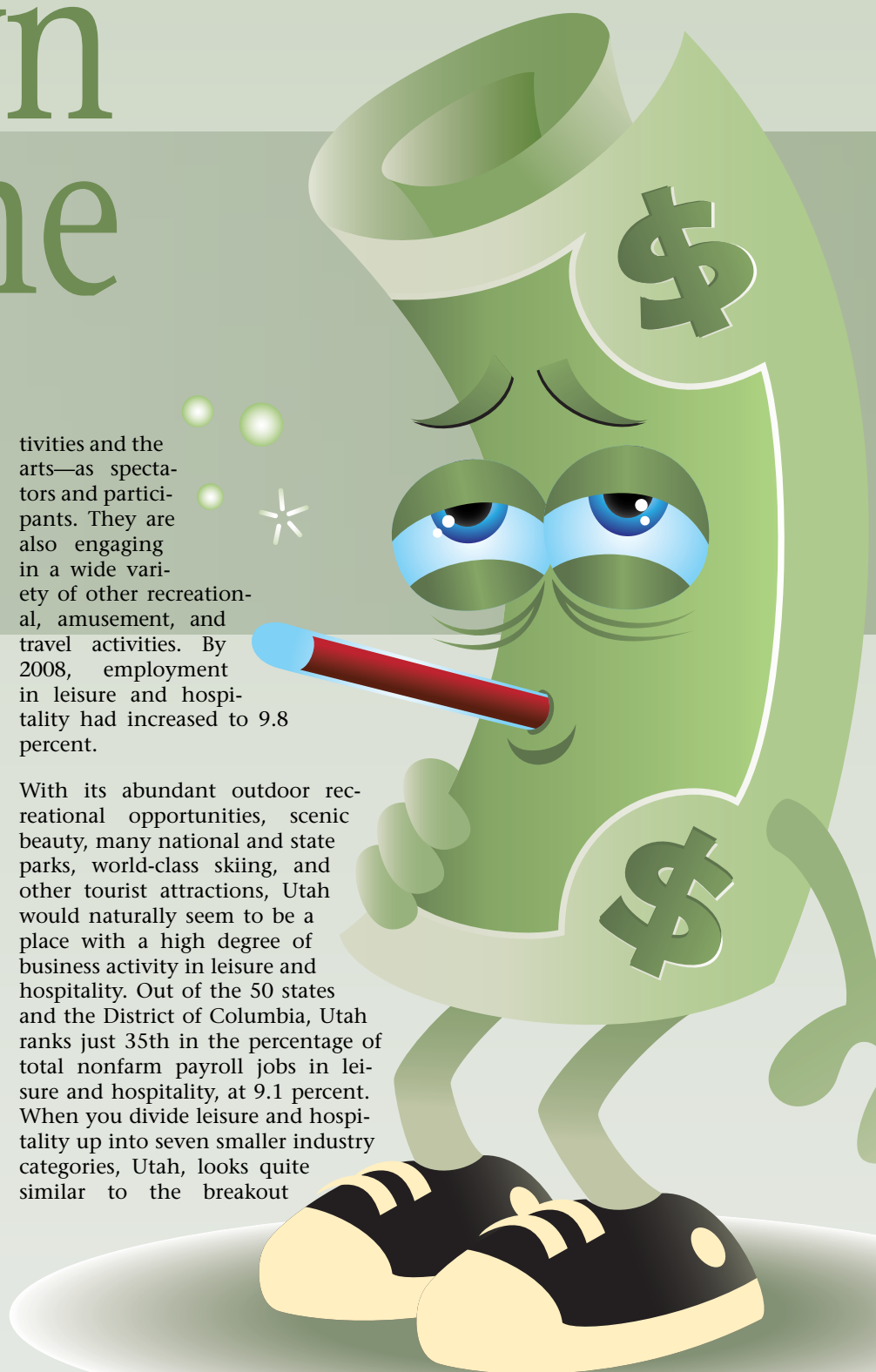
Since the start of the recession in December 2007 through June 2009, nonfarm payroll jobs have fallen in the U.S. by 6.5 million, a reduction of 4.7 percent. Job losses have been occurring in most broad industrial sectors including “leisure and hospitality” services, which has shed 383,000 jobs, a decline of 2.8 percent.

Undoubtedly, the structure of the national economy will change as this recession ends and growth resumes. The economy will expand again, with incomes rising and the standard of living in the United States improving. In this process, new knowledge and technology are incorporated into ever-changing patterns of commerce. Nowhere is the changing structure of economic activity more evident than in leisure and hospitality services—with the increasing demand for food and drink, recreation, amusement, and lodging.

In 1970, the leisure and hospitality industry accounted for about 6.7 percent of all nonfarm employment. Over time, Americans are choosing to eat out more and increasingly pursuing sporting ac-


tivities and the arts—as spectators and participants. They are also engaging in a wide variety of other recreational, amusement, and travel activities. By 2008, employment in leisure and hospitality had increased to 9.8 percent.

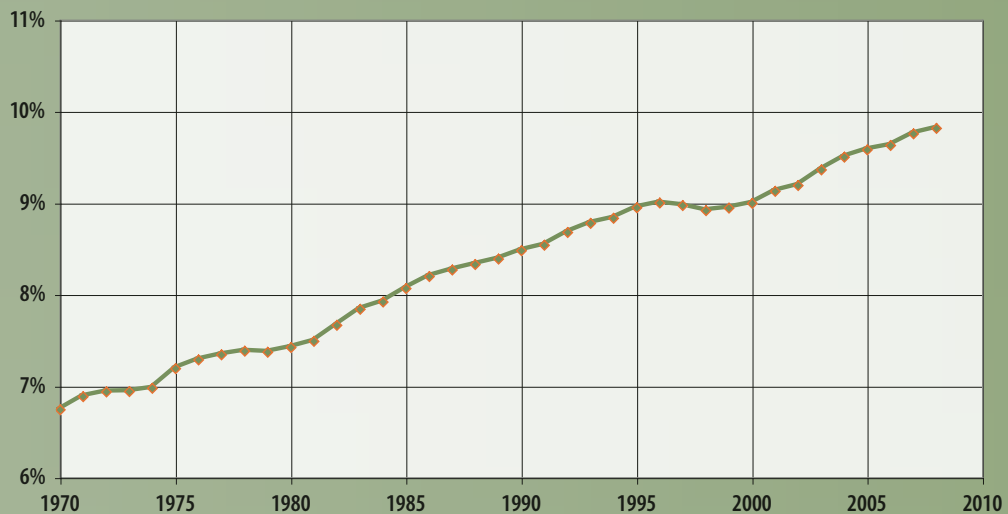
With its abundant outdoor recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, many national and state parks, world-class skiing, and other tourist attractions, Utah would naturally seem to be a place with a high degree of business activity in leisure and hospitality. Out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Utah ranks just 35th in the percentage of total nonfarm payroll jobs in leisure and hospitality, at 9.1 percent. When you divide leisure and hospitality up into seven smaller industry categories, Utah, looks quite similar to the breakout



found in the nation as a whole (see chart). Utah, with relatively fewer private sector jobs in recreation and lodging than the national average, still has a strong tourist draw from outdoor activities—particularly winter skiing. Utah ranks second, behind Colorado, in the proportion of its private jobs located at skiing facilities. While the pro-

portion of private Utah workers in the ski industry is just 0.32 percent, this is about 10 times the national average of just 0.03 percent. The direct ski industry jobs seem to be few but they support other leisure and hospitality jobs at restaurants and hotels. This is also true for many other Utah recreational pursuits—boating, hunting, camping,

river running, hiking and sightseeing. As we become more prosperous as a nation, people will seek to broaden their recreational, leisure and travel opportunities. So into the future, leisure and hospitality will continue to play an increasingly important role in the economic life of the United States and Utah. 



Leisure and Hospitality Jobs as a Percent of Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs in the U.S.

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